

**Minutes - Board of Directors Meeting  
North Carolina Cooperative Extension Secretaries Association**

**McKimmon Center  
Raleigh, NC  
March 14, 2003 -- 9 a.m.**

State President, Janet Mabry, called the 2003 NCCESA Board of Directors meeting to order at 9 a.m. Guests and members were welcomed. Copies of agenda were distributed to those present. Sandra Smith-Hopkins made a motion that the agenda be accepted as presented, seconded by Janice Dotson. Motion carried.

Melanie Chevalier, 1st Vice-President, gave the devotional, "The Five Fingers of Prayer."

The President lead the group in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Dr. Jon Ort, Associate Dean & Director, spoke briefly to the group concerning the aspects of an engaged university, such as:

1. responsiveness to the needs of people, engaging our communities;
2. respect for partners;
3. academic neutrality - an unbiased factual approach to an issue which the public expects from the university;
4. accessibility to the university;
5. new opportunities . Extension is only one part of a land-grant university-there are many other facets. It's important that the "left" hand knows what the "right"hand is doing - within the university at N.C. State, A&T State, and within the counties.
6. Resource partnerships - "gateway" counties. Gateway counties will open the doors - Administration does not have all the answers and will be pursuing the best way to successful achieve the goal of a totally engaged University. He expressed appreciation to secretaries' for their support of the total Extension program and their part in supporting the citizens of North Carolina.

Dr. Steve Jones, Vice-Chancellor, Extension & Engagement, reminded the secretaries "they are the front-line" and actually have more day-to-day contact with the people we serve and work with more than anybody else. He shared with the group three terms and commented on each:

1. engaged,
2. achieve,
3. gateway.

We are a community of achievers. Extension & engagement is in the front and center of everything. The new brochure N.C. State Achieve! was distributed to all present.

Dr. Joe Zublena, Assistant Director & Director of County Operations, spoke on "attitude", and the importance of making the public feel like they have called the right place when they call the office, rather than having that person feel like you don't want to talk to him. He briefly discussed the last reclassification done two years ago and announced that on July 1, 2003 increases that were provided for in the last reclassification will become effective. Dr. Zublena has assigned the planning of training for 2004 to the PODS group (Personal and Organizational Development System). Dr. Zublena indicated that planning assistance will be requested from the association and we will have an opportunity to help design the training. He spoke to the Staff Senate and provided clarification concerning Cooperative Extension Service and county partners related to employees classified under the State Personnel Act (SPA).

Sheri Plenert, Assistant Personnel Director, College of Ag & Life Sciences, N.C. State University.

- Sheri shared information about the Pride of the Wolfpack Award and encouraged employees to take a few minutes to recognize people for doing an outstanding job. There is an on-line form for nominating someone. The person selected for one of the Pride of the Wolfpack Awards receives a \$20 gift certificate to area vendors such as: Home Depot, Food Lion.
- Sheri discussed the situation of an SPA employee at the top of the pay scale in their grade. She explained that when the legislature provides a salary increase and an employee is at the top of the scale in their grade level - they receive a % in a lump sum - it is a one-time payment and it is not added to the base salary. If a county increases their pay scale, Extension will consider a salary adjustment based on that fact on an individual basis.
- Question was asked if & when Blue Cross Blue Shield (BCBS) changed from non-profit to profit, would it affect our health insurance? There should be little if any affect on us since our insurance is "State of NC," and is administered by BCBS. There will probably be an increase to the cost of the health insurance and will mean more money out of pocket for employees. Personnel Department is in the process of hiring two new staff members. Plans are to get the Personnel web page going real soon.

Mark Dearmon, State Policy Platform Chair of the State Employees Association of NC reminded the ones present how the employer retirement contribution has gone from 8.15% in 1999 to 0% contributed last year. SEANC is seeking an increase in the formula used to calculate retirement benefits; it is currently (1.82%). SEANC's website is SEANC. SEANC is the only group working for State Employees. He encouraged everyone to join the SEANC. He passed out some information on the salary & health care issues that provided more detail.

David Hayes, Executive Director of the NC Extension Foundation. David spoke regarding the amount of funding raised by the Foundation. He announced that it is the #1 fund raising foundation of its kind in the country. He mentioned briefly the Sue Mills Memorial Fund. Plans including hiring two more part-time employees to assist the

Foundation in identifying fund raising opportunities across the state. Currently the Foundation has about 37 endowments in place for scholarships provided for professional development. He mentioned briefly the new Landscapes of Opportunity campaign.

Dr. David Jenkins, Personal Organizational Development System (PODS), and Susan Bennett spoke about the 2004 statewide secretarial training. Over 250 secretaries attended the last training in 2000 where training began one day around 10:30 a.m. with registration, the educational portion started 3£Quad I xjm. continued into the next day,.. and ended with lunch.

Dr. Jenkins spoke about 2004 training

- - two possible models: all come to Raleigh for 1 1/2 days or PODS go out to three separate areas for a full day training session. Some comments were made that we might lose flexibility - will need some joint sessions with probably two concurrent sessions. Denise Brown indicated that three locations might not be enough - Dr. Jenkins seemed to think that it would - would reduce travel time to two hours one way to training location. A good location for the eastern part of the state would be in Kinston - Global Transport. Several commented that they liked the idea for all to come together in Raleigh - others liked the full day of training that did not require an overnight stay. It was suggested that we ask the district members how they felt - good time to do it since all districts will be meeting in the spring. PODS will develop a summary of possible options to share with district presidents to get feed back from members. President Mabry will be responsible for sending to districts. It was suggested that attendance should probably be mandatory. The survey should include a choice for the best time of the year to have a conference like this.
- At this time Dr. Jenkins asked the group "What would you like?" answers included:
  - Updates on critical issues facing Extension
  - Technology updates
  - General computer information - how to get the area IM agents to your county
  - Dr. Jenkins suggested we may want to have a panel of BIT personnel
  - Motivational training
  - Motivation for association
  - Volunteerism
  - Penalty Mail update - Joan Little - or whatever system we have at the time
- Denise Brown asked what happened to the bi-annual training - rather than every four years? Dr. Jenkins answered that it was the dreadful "B" word. He hopes we can work toward a bi-annual training for secretaries, but presently all training for everyone has been interrupted.

Meeting went into a 10-minute recess after all the speakers.

## Short Recess

Business Session called back to order at 11:10 a.m.

State President, Janet Mabry, called the meeting back to order at 11:10 a.m.

Roll Call: Brenda Conway, State Secretary, called the roll. The districts were represented as follows:

- North East - 2
- North Central - 4
- North West - 4
- South East - 3
- South Central - 5
- South West - 7
- West- 3
- Campus - 7
- 35 members in attendance

## Approval of Minutes

- The minutes of the last Board of Directors Meeting (September 19, 2002) were reviewed. Carolyn Newman, President, NCCESA- South Central District, requested a correction as follows: Under "new business" the last page, first sentence, "There was a discussion about the "public relations" newsletter." Please change to read "state" newsletter. Also, delete the sentence "it would be nice if it were linked to the newsletter". Chris Austin made the motion that the changes be accepted and minutes approved as corrected, seconded by Nancy Worley. Motion passed. Susan Brame, webmaster, will be notified of the changes.

Financial Report - Chris Austin, State Treasurer, provided a copy of the financial report to those present as follows:

- **Checking Account**
- September Balance: \$1,469.97
- Current Balance: \$4,104.69
- **Money Market Account**
- September Balance: \$11,225.00
- Interest earned: 133.80
- **Current Balance \$11,358.80**
- **Shares Account**
- September Balance: \$ 51.50
- Interest Earned: .55
- Current Balance: 51.65
- **Total liquid assets: \$15,515.14**

Treasurer indicated there have been few expenses within this fiscal year to date. There being no questions, the President stated the financial report will be filed for audit as presented.

Chris Austin, State Treasurer, and Chairman of the State Finance Committee, presented a 2003 Amended Budget. An amended budget is necessary due to a reduction in revenue, which is a direct result of a decline in paid association membership (from 282 to 259) as well as a \$1,000 reduction in the contribution from the NC Ag Agent's Association. Based on past decisions the funds received from NC Ag Agent's Association must be divided equally into four categories as follows: awards, scholarship, host district expenses, and money market. This would hold true for whatever amount is received. The 2003 Amended Budget is a recommendation from committee and does not require a second. After discussion, a vote was called to approve the recommended 2003 Amended Budget. Result: By majority vote the 2003 Amended Budget was approved as presented.

Chris Austin, State Treasurer, presented the Proposed 2004 Budget recommended by the State Finance Committee. The proposed budget was prepared based on the same reduction in revenues as experienced this year. Treasurer explained the reduction in revenue and the realignment of projected expenses to continue to provide funds for awards, scholarship, host district professional improvement, and money market. The proposed budget does include revenue projection of \$1,000 from the Ag. Agents Association, but it is not certain that we will receive this contribution. Since the proposed recommendations are from the State Finance Committee, a second is not required. After discussion, a vote was called to approve the Proposed 2004 Budget as recommended by the State Finance Committee. Result: All were in favor of the Proposed 2004 Budget. It will be presented to the general membership at the state meeting in September.

## **Committee Reports**

- Membership: Laura Walters reported for the Chairman, Denese Prevatte.
  - Three districts are reporting 100 percent participation. Total membership is 259. A membership brochure was developed to help inform new secretaries about the association. A suggested welcome letter with details of the appropriate district along with the brochure will be sent to new secretaries encouraging them to join the association. It was suggested that the brochure be added to the association website in a PDF format.
- Nominating; Nancy Faulk, Chairman,
  - reported the 2nd Vice-President nominee for 2004 would come from the Campus Chapter. Secretary & Treasurer nominees can be from any district. She asked all district presidents to have state officer nomination on their spring district association agenda. State Officer Nomination form is on the association website. Nomination forms are due to State Nominating Chairman by August 1.
- Professional Improvement - Debbie Hunter, Chair

- asked all Professional Improvement Committee Chairs to notify all the secretaries in their district that secretaries are eligible to join the Epsilon Sigma Phi. Most districts have a "Secretary of the Year" Award. Secretaries are encouraged to apply for any awards when eligible. Take advantage of trainings and classes that are offered by Extension or local community colleges. Kashuna Little and Chris Austin were recipients of last year's scholarship. Since Kashuna Little is leaving Extension, she returned the scholarship monies. The Chair read a letter from Chris Austin stating the classes she took would continue to be of great help in her work with Extension.
- Public Relations -Kay Morton, Chairman,
  - reported that her committee plans to post a state newsletter to the web page twice a year, no later than 5 p.m. on the last day in June and December. District Public Relations Chairmen should provide information from their district to the State Public Relations Chair by June 1. Carolyn Newman commented that she hoped a month was sufficient time for the newsletter to be edited and posted. Kay responded that it will be a work in progress.
- Reflections Committee - Nancy Worley, Chairman
  - reported that districts have been submitting items for the scrapbooks. She asked that districts please go ahead and do captions for the pictures as you would like to see them in the scrapbook - she does not have time to do them. Please be sure to identify everyone in your pictures. Continue to submit items of interest from your district. The latest two books are on display today.
- Rules & By Laws - Debbie Cox, Chairman.
 

The following changes to the Rules and By Laws are being recommended. The changes are proposed for clarification for a question posed by an Honorary Member.

  - Article IV - Membership. Section 4, first paragraph, last sentence. Now reads: Associate Members shall have all privileges of Active Members except that of holding office and voting. Change to read: Associate Members shall have all privileges of Active Members.
  - Article IV - Membership. Section 5 - first paragraph, last sentence. Now reads: An Honorary Member shall pay no dues except where he/she is an Active Member. Change to Read: An Honorary Member shall pay no dues except where he/she is an Active or Associate Member.

The proposed change was approved by the Executive Board and comes as a recommendation to the full Board of Directors. After discussion, the recommendation as presented was approved by vote. Proposed changes will be posted to the web site at least two weeks prior to our state meeting as prescribed in Association By-Laws. Membership will vote on proposed change at annual meeting in September.

## **District Reports**

- Northeast District - Melanie Chevalier reporting.
  - They have 100% membership. Dr. King attended their fall district meeting in Beaufort. Shelia Ange is archiving minutes of the district meetings on their web site. The fall meeting will be held in Bertie County. Officers will also be installed at that time.
- Southeast District - Cynthia Potter reporting.
  - Their 2002 spring meeting was held in Lenoir County. They enjoyed a wonderful program in song by Rick Vernon, "Where Were You When the World Stopped Turning," by Alan Jackson and "God Bless the USA.". They learned four different kinds of floral arrangements at the fall meeting held in New Hanover County. The Charitable Contribution Scholarship went to Lenoir County, the Secretary's Scholarship went to Sampson County, and the 4-H Scholarship went to New Hanover County.
- West District - Janice Dotson reporting.
  - For the past year, their district meetings were concentrated on planning the state meeting. There was a total of 181 in attendance at the meeting in September 2002. In April, 2002, the spring meeting was held at the Quality Inn, site of our 2002 state meeting. Research & Extension Center in Fletcher was the site for the fall meeting. Their 4-H Scholarship was given to a 4-Her who went as an exchange student to Japan. They have 95% membership. The membership chair will contact the non-members encouraging them to join.
- North Central District - Addie Suggs reporting.
  - Edgecombe County hosted the spring meeting. Guest speaker was Patsy Holland with B & G Fitness Center, spoke on stress and our body. Ruth Young was presented the "Secretary of the Year" award. Durham County hosted the fall meeting, with Dr. Michael Walden, Investment Professor & Extension Economist from N.C. State, was the guest speaker. He spoke on "Being a Wise Investor." Five secretaries were awarded for their years of service in Extension. Gloria Morning received an Award of Excellence in Special Leadership. Karen Whitley was presented a silver tray for her 30 years of service with Extension. Susan Brame, State Webmaster, continues doing a fantastic job with our web page and keeping us all informed.
- South Central District - Carolyn Newman reporting.
  - They have 100% membership with 2 new secretaries, and a new district secretary. Information for the "Secretary of the Year" Award will be mailed in June. Lee County will host the spring meeting. The district web page is almost completed. South Central District has the Herter-O'Neal Scholarship this year. The scholarship information has been forwarded to all the counties within the district. Carolyn Newman has been nominated to serve on the Change Agent States for Diversity (CASD) Catalyst Team for North Carolina. One of the goals of the CASD team is to set standards and implement a vision for supporting healthy, thriving, culturally diverse communities through Extension, research and academic programs.
- Campus Chapter - Mary Cox, President, reporting.

- They have 22 members. Secretary of the Year Award was presented to Susan Bennett, PODS secretary. In June, they had a picnic at the Raleigh Rose Garden, with Master Gardener, Ann Clapp, talking to the group about raising roses. Three members from Campus helped with the Horn of Plenty. Eight members attended the State Meeting in Boone. A Christmas luncheon was enjoyed by the Campus Chapter at the Talley Student Center on campus. Their January meeting's guest speaker was Dr. Lanny Hass, entitled "Generations at Work" -i.e.veterans, baby boomers, Xers, and Nexters. Professional Improvement Committee, Susan Bennett & Grace Haven arranged the program. A very special meeting is planned for April 9. Details are not permitted at this time.
- Northwest District - Catherine Waddell reporting.
  - They do not have 100% membership but do have 100% of the counties represented. Victoria House in East Bend (Rockingham County) was the location for the spring meeting. The Bright Ideas Award was presented to Karen Robertson, and Secretary of the Year Award went to Linda Dunn.
  - Denise Brown (Surry) was recipient of the Epsilon Sigma Phi's State Meritorious Support Award, plus College of Agriculture and Life Science Award for Excellence, Rita Wheeler (Randolph) for Award of Excellence for Special Leadership; Vickie Blackwelder (Davie) - Friends of Extension. Alleghany County, the Beau Golf Club in Roaring Gap, was the setting for the October 11, 2002, meeting. They had two new members present (Tumeka Johnson-Rowan Co., Caroline Steed -Guilford). Dr. Ron Jarrett updated them on the budget. Donna Bumgarner received the District Award of Excellence for Technology Utilization & Implementation, and Vickie Moore (Ashe) was recipient of the Award of Excellence for Special Leadership.
  - The Northwest District invites everyone to the State Meeting on September 25 & 26, at the Radisson in High Point. The theme for our 30th anniversary will be "You Are a Star." Festivities will begin with lunch on Thursday, educational sessions, an Office Expo, Trade Show, health Fair & bazaar. For the banquet, everyone is encouraged to come dressed as their favorite movie or TV star. An award will be presented for the best costume. Members & guests will attend a play after the evening program. The business meeting will be held on Friday followed by a surprise. The Northwest District is looking forward to hosting the 2003 State Meeting.
- (Southwest District). Dana Braswell.
  - Dana Braswell, Southwest District, reported their district not only has 100% membership but also has their own website. Secretaries within their district were recognized as follows: Christine Barrier, (Cabarrus County) for receiving the 2002 SWD Secretary of the Year Award and the 2002 State Executive Board Award; Chris Austin (Union County) for receiving the State 2002 Professional Improvement Scholarship and for being the 2002-2003 State Treasurer; Miranda Pope (Catawba County) for receiving the Southwest District Award of Excellence in Technology Utilization and Implementation; and to Billie Rosene, Mecklenburg County, for receiving

the Southwest District 2002 Award of Excellence in Special Leadership. Southwest District will be hosting the 2004 State Meeting.

### **Special Committee Reports**

- Federation Report: Denise Brown, Federation Advisor, reported on long agendas, telephone conferences, e-mail installations and bad weather summing up her year as President of the Federation. Issues and opportunities submitted by the N.C. Federation of Cooperative Extension Associations were Professional Development and Reporting, Staffing Patterns and Program Delivery, Personnel Inequity, and Computer Technology. Issues & Solutions; Response from Administration; Association Issues. Following three issues were exclusive to secretaries: Secretarial Reclassification and/or Merit Inability, SPA at Top of Scale, and money for Secretarial Reclassification.
- Staff Senate - Alternate Senator Beverly Burney, Bladen County, spoke briefly and then introduced Natalie Worth, Chair, Staff Senate. She discussed the lack of communication between Staff Senate and county Extension SPA employees and her efforts to correct. Natalie indicated they want and appreciate our county SPA employees being on Staff Senate. Voting will be held soon for new senators in District 14 - please nominate eligible candidates and then take time to vote when the ballot is received. Staff Senate is attempting to get correct procedures established and written down so they can be followed in the future. They have decided that in order to be sure county Extension SPA employees receive communications, they are going to be sent to the District Administrative Assistants who will in turn forward to their district counties. August is when they pull the constituent list - Marty Winkler, Governance Chair, has made it is personal mission to get the communication issue resolved. Natalie asked us to communicate any issues and concerns we may have to her or through the elected Staff Senators. There is a link from the NCCESA website to the Staff Senate website. Natalie may be contacted by e-mail at Natalie.
- CASD PROJECT - (Change Agent States for Diversity) - Carolyn Newman was nominated to serve on this team. It is a project, initiated by Cooperative Extension, a catalytic step in beginning the transformation of the Land Grant System. It is a consortium of eight states dedicated to supporting greater cultural diversity in the Land Grant System by bringing the needed technical skills and training to each member state. Goals are to build the capacity of the Land Grant system to function inclusively and effectively in a multicultural world and to set standards and implement a vision for supporting healthy, thriving, culturally diverse communities through Extension, research and academic programs.
- Horn of Plenty - Janet Mabry reported it will be held on August 15, ShowPlace in High Point. Brenda Morris is serving as Chairman of the event and has asked if our association would like to continue to be responsible for working with the beverages. There were no objections from the floor. Details will be forthcoming and will be shared when available. There is a line item in the budget for the contribution to Horn of Plenty from the association.

- Executive Board Award - Melanie Chevalier, First Vice-President reported the award is based on participation, contributions and cooperation with the association. The recipient should be someone who has exhibited outstanding loyalty and dedication to the association. The award winner will receive \$200 and a plaque. Deadline is August 1. The nomination form is located on the association website.
- Herter-O'Neal Scholarship - Regina O'Pharrow, 2nd Vice-President, reporting. Rotated to the South Central District. All scholarship information has been sent to Carolyn Newman, District President. Deadline for getting the scholarship information back to Regina O'Pharrow is March 28. The State Scholarship Committee will then choose an appropriate candidate.

### **New Business**

- Sue Mills Memorial Fund - Suggestions from Sue Mill's husband were that the funds be made available to the association for its use. Some suggestions were that it be used for scholarship or a special award. President Mabry will refer to a committee for study.
- Honorary Members - The Executive Board approved honorary membership for Cathy Fields (Bladen) and Karen Whitley (Edgecombe County). Cynthia Potter made the motion to accept the two candidates for consideration of Honorary Membership, Nancy Faulk seconded the motion. Motion carried. Candidates will be presented to full membership for acceptance vote at annual meeting in September.
- Recruiting New Members - Chiquita McCallister, NC A & T State University, has requested information about our association. President Mabry will follow up with the Membership Committee and the North West District on this matter.

### **Announcements**

2003 State Meeting - President Mabry announced that the Executive Board will meet on Wednesday, September 24, 7 p.m. and the Board of Directors will meet on Thursday, September 25 at 10 a.m. There will be a Past President's Breakfast on Thursday morning at 8 a.m. prior to the Board of Director's meeting. Invitations will be sent to past presidents.

President reminded district presidents they would need to view the district list of members that are eligible to serve as a state officer and provide them to state president by May 1.

President complimented all district associations that have district websites: North East, North West, and South West.

Sandra Smith-Hopkins made a motion that the Board of Directors meeting be adjourned, and seconded by several secretaries. Motion carried.

Meeting adjourned at 12:20 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Brenda Conway  
State Secretary NCCESA